

Troopers Arrest Philadelphia Man for Theft of Fuel



Vincent B. CHINN Jr.

Wilmington – Delaware State Police detectives with the assistance of DNREC's Natural Resources Police Environmental Crimes Unit have arrested Vincent B. Chinn Jr., 34, of Philadelphia, PA, for his involvement in the theft of thousands of gallons of gasoline.

Beginning on Thursday July 5th, 2018, the Delaware State Police began investigating a series of thefts that were taking place at various Shell Gas Stations throughout New Castle County. The initial investigations determined that in the early

morning hours, between 1:30 a.m. and 4:30 a.m., the suspect, who would later be identified as Chinn, would syphon hundreds of gallons of fuel from underground storage tanks and then transfer it to plastic tanks which were contained on a utility trailer.

Through a variety of investigative measures detectives were able to identify a blue, Dodge Ram, 4 door pick-up truck, towing a utility trailer as a suspect vehicle. On Thursday, July 26, 2018 at approximately 4:10 a.m., Troopers observed the suspect vehicle, which contained the tanks, in the area of the Shell Gas Station, located at 300 South Walnut Street, Wilmington. The vehicle was stopped on I-495 northbound in the area of 12th Street and Chinn was identified as the driver and sole occupant of the vehicle. Due to the possibility of hazardous materials being present officers from DNREC's Environmental Crimes Unit responded to assist with the investigation. It was determined that the plastic storage tanks contained on the trailer were empty and were safe to transport.

Chinn, who also has ties to Newark, DE, was taken in to custody without incident and the vehicle and trailer were towed to Delaware State Police Troop 2 where a search warrant was executed. As a result of the search, evidence was recovered further linking Chinn to the thefts.

The thefts occurred at the following locations and involved the specified quantity of gasoline and associated value:

July 5, 2018: Shell Gas, 4495 Summit Bridge Road, Middletown. (661 gallons/\$2,267.23)

July 10, 2018: Shell Gas, 841 Pulaski Highway, Bear. (416 gallons/\$1,345.24)

July 15, 2018: Shell Gas, 4495 Summit Bridge Road, Middletown. (666 gallons/\$2,364.30)

Chinn was charged by Delaware State Police detectives with two counts of Theft greater than \$1500.00 (F) and one count of Theft less than \$1500.00 (M).

Chinn was also charged by the Delaware Natural Resources Police Environmental Crimes Unit with 3 counts of Constructing Equipment to Discharge an Air Contaminant without a Permit (M).

Chinn was arraigned in Justice of the Peace Court #2 and released on \$6100.00 unsecured bond.

Anyone with information regarding this incident is asked to contact Detective B. Harris at Troop 2 by calling 302-365-8410.

Information may also be provided by calling Delaware crime stoppers at 1-800-TIP-3333 or via the internet at <http://www.delaware.crimestoppersweb.com>

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Presented by Public Information Officer, Master Corporal Michael Austin

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